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troughs, and, during the retreat of the ice, the formation of the great quaternary river and valley systems. It is their deposits that have brought the country into undeserved disrepute because, being almost level, these old river beds determined the layout of the railroads which, therefore avoid almost all the picturesque parts of the country and give the traveller the impression that northern Germany is one continuous waste of sand.

The surface forms which were left after the retreat of the ice and the great rivers were not much modified in postglacial times because erosion and weathering have not yet been long enough at work. The only changes which have influenced the landscape since are the filling in of depressions left by the ice and the upbuilding, or destruction, of the coasts.

M. K. GENTHE.

**A Concise Dictionary of Old Icelandic.** By Geir T. Zoëga. v and 551 pp. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1910.

The author is known for his English-Icelandic and Icelandic-English Dictionary. He prepared this work in the belief that Icelandic may be studied with advantage by English-speaking peoples, because it supplies a linguistic basis for the study of the Scandinavian influence that "was the earliest and one of the strongest of those outward forces which have gone to the making of modern English"; also because Icelandic is the source of much of the information necessary for the understanding of the early period of British history.

### CARTOGRAPHY

**Maps and Map-Making.** Three lectures delivered under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society. By E. A. Reeves, F.R.A.S., etc. xiii and 145 pp., maps, illustrations and diagrams. The Royal Geographical Society, London, 1910.

Mr. Reeves' little book makes extremely good reading. Any map user who opens it will be sure to turn the page. It is not a treatise. It will not teach the beginner how to do it. Being lectures before the world's most distinguished body of geographic amateurs, it sets forth and admirably illustrates the interesting things in the history of instruments and maps. There is no attempt at completeness either of history or theory; rather a general notion is built up of how map making is done and how the methods have grown. There has been success in this, for the book as a whole is amazingly clear. Only elementary considerations are entered into, of course, but a superficial knowledge of some measuring instruments is assumed. Rarely, an obscure explanation is offered, as that of the polar flattening evidenced by the fact that the number of miles in a degree is greater toward the poles, "inasmuch as the vertical lines, or radii of the arcs subtending the same angle, increase in length," p. 66. Nor can one well assent to the following:—"Even now longitude is much more troublesome to find than latitude, for the reason that there is no natural zero line from which it can be measured," p. 71. Surely longitude would be quite as troublesome to determine if the earth had been created with a natural zero of longitude plainly marked upon it.

Mr. Reeves' examples of modern maps and methods are exclusively British. Surely the best German map-work deserved an example and such beautiful work with contours as Mr. Matthes' Yosemite sheet should have been reproduced. Further there should be mention of the use of colors symbolically, as

on the maps of the United States Geological Survey; blue for water, brown for relief and black for culture.

Most interesting is the geographic gossip: how hard John Harrison found it (p. 43) to get the prize for his successful chronometer till the king took a hand; how it was Newton who really designed the first reflecting instrument (p. 18); how the five mile base on Hounslow Heath was measured with wooden rods in 1783 and again in 1791 with steel tapes, the results agreeing within three inches; that the concept of a spherical earth was probably Chaldaean or Egyptian.

One sees that Mr. Reeves has made ingenious modifications of a number of survey instruments. His man's head drawn upon the world net of various projections to illustrate the distortion due to each is a useful idea. The book is not suited for instruction but geography teachers will find it enjoyable and of use.

MARK JEFFERSON.

### POLAR

**The North Pole.** Its Discovery in 1909. Under the Auspices of the Peary Arctic Club. By Robert E. Peary. With an Introduction by Theodore Roosevelt, and a Foreword by Gilbert H. Grosvenor. xxxii and 373 pp., map, illustrations, appendices and index. Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York, 1910. \$4.80.

The best book Peary has written and in some respects the best that has been published on the Arctic. Not a small part of the volume is a compact expression of the quintessence of a quarter of a century's experience—the outcome of many years of study, planning, experiment and toil. No one could have written the book if he had lacked Peary's preparation for it. The work is therefore unique, both as a contribution to Arctic literature and also as the history of the first conquest of the North Pole by the man who made it.

The volume is worth the closest study of every man outfitting for Polar exploration. It would be foolish for any one to attempt to sail the Smith Sound channels without knowing all that Peary has written here about this long and dangerous stretch of navigation. Peary knew every foot of the Ellesmere Land and Grant Land coasts, all the indentations, the possible shelter for ships, every place where icebergs usually ground and the regions where the tide runs strongest. The reading of many of these pages brings the constantly recurring thought that a large part of Peary's active life was a preparation for the writing of the book.

The explorer says that the meeting place of the tides coming from Baffin Bay on the south, and from Lincoln Sea on the north, is in the neighborhood of Cape Frazer. This Cape, by the way, well-known in Smith Sound annals, does not appear on the map that illustrates the explorer's narrative. The map seems to have been prepared without Peary's supervision. The only new detail it could give were the explorer's routes, from Cape Columbia to and from the Pole and his soundings on the way; but the soundings are not shown and the return route from the Pole is not correctly laid down, for the map shows it as diverging all the way from the northern sledge track, with which it was, however, practically identical.

On his great sledge journey to the Pole, Peary did not use sleeping bags and in fact he has never used them since his first journey over the inland ice to the northern coast of Greenland in 1891-92, when he established the fact that Greenland is the largest island in the world. His party slept on the floor of